



NEWS RELEASE

OFFICE OF THE UNITED STATES ATTORNEY
WESTERN DISTRICT OF MISSOURI

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

PETTIS COUNTY MAN INDICTED FOR THREATENING COUNTY PROSECUTOR, CIRCUIT JUDGES

JEFFERSON CITY, Mo. – Todd P. Graves, United States Attorney for the Western District of Missouri, announced that a Pettis County, Mo., man was indicted by a federal grand jury today for mailing threatening letters.

Michael Wayne Thornton, 34, was charged in a 10-count indictment returned by a federal grand jury in Jefferson City.

Today's indictment alleges that **Thornton** mailed a series of threatening letters to Pettis County Prosecutor Jeff Mittelhauser, Pettis County Circuit Judge Donald Barnes and Pettis County Associate Circuit Judge Robert Koffman between Aug. 1, 2003, to March 3, 2004. Each count of the federal indictment charges a separate threatening letter that was mailed during that time frame.

Graves cautioned that the charges contained in the indictment are simply accusations, and not evidence of guilt. Evidence supporting the charges must be presented to a federal trial jury, whose duty is to determine guilt or innocence.

This case is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Jim Lynn. It was investigated by the Federal Bureau of Investigations and the Missouri Department of Corrections.

This news release, as well as additional information about the office of the United States Attorney for the Western District of Missouri, is available on-line at

www.usdoj.gov/usao/mow